



St. Rita Catholic Community

12521 Inwood Road

Dallas, TX 75244



Congratulations on your upcoming marriage!

You are about to embark on an incredible journey and we are pleased that you have chosen to celebrate this joyous occasion with us, your faith community.

We welcome you with open arms!

This **period of engagement** is a step between dating (*discernment*) and marriage. The Church recognizes the significance of this time and offers assistance and support during your discernment as the period before celebrating this important decision; *the period of engagement* demand that the couple mutually plan and prepare for your future life together.

Matrimony, like Holy Orders, is a vocation; a call to a particular way of life that you are choosing to live. It is also a '*Sacrament of Service*', a call to selfless giving to each other. As with all sacraments, your marriage ceremony is one of the liturgies of the Church that must be celebrated within the parish community and the Church universal.

A part of the preparation will require that you:

- a. Meet with the parish marriage delegate who will begin preparing required marriage paperwork called '*Pre-nuptial Questionnaire*'.
- b. Complete a FOCCUS Inventory that will be used by the *Sponsor Couple*, to assist in discussing areas/topics essential in building a healthy, successful marriage.
- c. Attend a *Sacramental Marriage Preparation (SMP)* weekend, facilitated by diocesan trained married couples.
- d. Meet with the priest or deacon to plan your wedding liturgy.

We pray that God will bless you both in your journey of love and faith.

*Fr. Joshua Whitfield
Pastoral Administrator,
Clergy and Staff of
St. Rita Catholic Community*

FEES

Payable at	Date paid	Amount Exp. Code 5362.04	Received by
At first meeting	___/___/20__	Check _____ Cash _____	_____
<i>wedding sessions should you choose to enroll for a series of classes</i>			
60 days prior to wedding date, by ___/___/20__	___/___/20__	Check _____ Cash _____	_____
60 days prior to wedding dated by ___/___/20__	___/___/20__	Check _____ Cash _____	_____
Minimum of 2 months prior	___/___/20__	Check _____ Cash _____	Rec'd by _____ Refunded ___/___/20__
14 days prior to the wedding, ___/___/20__	<u>Directly to Musician (s)</u>		
At wedding rehearsal	<u>Directly to Priest or Deacon</u>		

ST. RITA PARISH PROCESSES &

Regarding ... The Sacrament of Matrimony

Item	Amount Inc. Code 4241.01	Note	Payable to
Marriage Preparation			
FOCCUS Profile fee	\$25	Marriage Preparation Profile	St. Rita Catholic Community
Diocesan Marriage documentation fee	\$100 Catholic/non-Catholic or 2 nd marriage	If applicable, documentation to be sent by ____/____/20____	
NFP - Introductory Class		<i>Fee applicable for Natural Family Plan.</i>	
Facility			
Parish Wedding Coordinator	\$200	Payable to Margaret Saliba	
Church utilities & services fee	\$250 parishioner	Per arrangements with Parish	St. Rita Catholic Community
	\$400 non-parishioner		
Rental of Facilities Commons Sweeney Hall	<u>TBA</u> <u>TBA</u>	Must be requested and reserved	
Musicians Fee (s) & Clergy Stipends			
Music CD	\$10	Deposit	St. Rita Catholic Community
Musicians Organist Cantor	\$250 \$150		Payable to Musician
Officiating Priest/Deacon	A stipend is offered and appreciated		Priest/Deacon

The sacrament of marriage is to be celebrated by mature Christians. Each person in the relationship brings to the marriage the maturity and ability to be united in a covenant of love, possessing a vision of faith.

For Roman Catholics, marriage is more than a civil contract; it is a lifelong covenant of love between a man and a woman. *God himself is the author of marriage, ... written in the very nature of man and woman. It is not a purely human institution,¹ but an intimate partnership between husbands and wives as they learn to give and receive love selflessly within an intimate partnership with God. Christian marriage in particular is a great mystery, a sign of the love between Christ and his Church.² The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.³*

Through the exchange of consent/vows each person:

- Administers the sacrament to each other.
- Priest or Deacon accepts their consent/vows on behalf of the Church and offers them to God in prayer with the promises, continued support of the Church family.

On the wedding day, it is the desire of St. Rita pastoral staff to have each couple and their families experience and celebrate this faith dimension of their love and make it a joyous and memorable occasion.

¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) Marriage in the order of creation #1603

² Ephesians 5:31-32

³ Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) The Sacrament of Matrimony #1601

**Present Church Law Concerning Marriage
For members of the Roman Catholic Faith**

When a Catholic marries, whether he/she is marrying another Catholic or a person of another faith tradition, the Catholic Church requires that:

◆ ***Both parties must be free to marry.***

Either party who has been previously married - *whether Catholic or not, married with or without the permission of the Church* - must provide documentation regarding the status of that marriage before a wedding date is reserved.

◆ ***Marriage should occur in the Church of the bride or groom.***

One party must be a registered participating member of St. Rita parish. The wedding ceremony **must be** witnessed by a Catholic priest or deacon.

◆ ***Two witnesses*** who are practicing Catholics or Christians.

◆ ***Baptismal Certificate (s) with Notations.***

The original baptismal certificate is NOT valid for this purpose.

For Catholics a current certificate of Baptism with notations issued within 6 months of the wedding date must be obtained.

For non-Catholics a current certificate of Baptism or letter on Church stationery must be obtained.

These can be acquired by calling or writing to your Church of Baptism

◆ ***Pre-Marital Investigation (Pre-Nuptial paperwork)***

Prior to meeting with priest, deacon or parish delegate the Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire must be completed at the church office **six months** (weddings at St. Rita), **nine months** (weddings occurring elsewhere)

◆ ***Affidavit of Freedom to Marry..***

These questionnaires are to be completed by parties (*preferable a relative*) who have known the couple since the age of 14.

ST. RITA PARISH CONTACT INFORMATION

Title	Name	Contact
<u><i>Questions pertaining to the wedding liturgy and selected readings</i></u>		
Pastoral Administrator	Fr. Joshua Whitfield	972-934-8388 x 6506 jwhitfield@stritaparish.net
Parochial Vicar	Fr. Steve Antes	972-934-8388 x 6509 santes@stritaparish.net
Deacon	Charles Sylvester	chaspatti@sbcglobal.net
Deacon	Bill Fobes	billfobes123@gmail.com
Deacon	Doug Breckenridge	deacondoug@swbell.net
<u><i>Questions pertaining to Annulments</i></u>		
Parish Administrator	Deacon. Denis Corbin	214-451-6510 dcorbin@stritaparish.net
<u><i>General questions on marriage, preparation, or facilities usage, policies and forms</i></u>		
Pastoral Center	Ramona Corbin	214-451-6568 rcorbin@stritaparish.net
<u><i>Registering as a St. Rita parishioner</i></u>		
Registrar	Vilma Ricciardi	972-934-8388 x 6511 vrizziardi@stritaparish.net
<u><i>Questions pertaining to music and musicians</i></u>		
Parish Music Department	Mindy Hatzmann	214-451-6555 mhatzmann@stritaparish.net
<u><i>Questions pertaining to Altar & Church decorations and photography</i></u>		
Wedding Coordinator	Margaret Saliba	Cell-972-489-8095 (972-934-8388 x 6520)

Church and Altar Decorations

Flowers:



Parish Wedding Coordinator (Sacristan) has final authority in this regard. All church decorations must have the prior approval of the Parish Wedding Coordinator (Sacristan) who will advise on placement in the Church.

The use of rice, birdseed, or rose petals at St. Rita Catholic Church and premises are prohibited.

Photographers / Videographers (amateur and/or professional):

- ◆ The wedding ceremony is a religious service, all involved are asked to show reverence of the ceremony and the Sanctuary.
- ◆ During the ceremony, photographers and videographers are asked to remain **outside the Sanctuary** when taking pictures.

Flash photography is prohibited during the ceremony.

Pictures are permissible during the recessional. The bridal party may reassemble in the Sanctuary after the ceremony and re-take parts of the ceremony.

Consult the Parish Wedding Coordinator regarding questions on where and when pictures may be taken.

Parish Community Helps with Preparation

We believe that all members of the parish share in these responsibilities by assisting with the preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony, as each marriage affects the Church universal.

~~~~~



**Priest**

-



**Deacon**

The priest or deacon who witness the marriage has the responsibility of guiding those desiring marriage in the Church in discerning their readiness for the Sacrament of Matrimony as understood by the Church.

~~~~~

St. Rita Parish Marriage Preparation Process

Members who are being married at St. Rita, or being prepared for marriage in another diocese, state or country, are expected to follow these procedures:

1. Call St. Rita parish office to schedule the initial meeting.
2. During these meetings:
 - i. A helpful relationship with the couple is developed.
 - ii. **Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire** is completed.
 - * The couple is informed of needed documents and time-frame.
 - * Contact information on marriage preparation weekends, music, church decorations, etc., are discussed.
 - * The couple completes the FOCCUS Inventory Form.
 - * The schedule of our Sacramental Marriage Preparation (SMP) weekends is shared.

All couples are required to attend the parish-based Sacramental Marriage Preparation (SMP) weekend scheduled twice per year (Spring and Fall).

3. After completing the FOCCUS Inventory, the assigned Sponsor Couple contacts the engaged couple to schedule four meetings, convenient to both sponsors and couple. Meetings are arranged on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

About ... Sponsor Couple Program

This program was established by the Diocese of Dallas and implemented at St. Rita in 1981. Sponsor Couples are skilled married couples whom the Pastoral Staff, together with others, judge as exemplifying the Sacrament of Matrimony.

- ◆ Commissioned by the Pastor, these lay ministers volunteer time and talent in assisting him as he ministers to those seeking marriage in the Catholic Church. They assist couples discerning the call to be married in 'how to' live their vocation and sacrament of matrimony.

Following these meetings each couple will be contacted via e-mail to schedule a meeting with the pastor or deacon.

It is of utmost importance that sufficient time be made available to complete all marriage preparation before the scheduled wedding date.

Natural Family Planning (NFP)

Classes in Natural Family Planning (NFP), though not a requirement at St. Rita, are highly recommended and are offered by the Couple to Couple League of North America www.dfwnfp.org.

Couples are urged become familiar with the Church's teaching on marriage and family regarding:

- * Openness to life.
- * The importance of the gift of sexuality in marriage.

Parish Wedding Coordinator



The wedding liturgy / ceremony comes under the direction of the pastor and the parish wedding coordinator (Sacristan) who provides assistance in the planning.

As a fixed ritual of the Church, the parish wedding coordinator's focus is on the liturgical aspect of the wedding ceremony.

Services of an outside wedding consultant are not necessary for this preparation

Wedding Rehearsal:

The rehearsal is a time of prayer and preparation for the ceremony that will occur the next day.

Wedding rehearsal is scheduled at the initial meeting when a wedding date is secured (*pending completion of required preparation*).

The wedding party (*bride, groom, groomsmen, bridesmaids, and readers*) **are expected to attend the rehearsal**. The Parish Wedding Coordinator supervises the rehearsal ensuring that all become familiar and at ease with the liturgy. Readers may use this opportunity to practice speaking from the Ambo.

Food, drink or alcohol are not permitted in the Church, at the wedding rehearsal or the wedding ceremony.

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE SHOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE PRIEST/ DEACON AT THE TIME OF THE WEDDING REHEARSAL. THE MAID OF HONOR AND THE BEST MAN SHOULD SIGN THE LICENSE AT THIS TIME (if witness signatures are required on the forms of the issuing county). THE PRIEST / DEACON WILL SIGN THE LICENSE AFTER THE WEDDING CEREMONY AND RETURN IT TO THE PASTOR'S SECRETARY WHO WILL MAIL IT TO THE COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

Guest Musicians:

Guest musicians are welcome. Seek approval from the Music Department before confirming arrangements.

They are required to:

- ◆ Attend an additional rehearsal with the organist prior to the day of the wedding (*\$35 per half-hour is applicable*). In some cases, a tape may be submitted for approval.
- ◆ Expected to learn the approved music on their own. St. Rita will provide a loaned copy of the music found in the Worship and Gather hymnals and on the St. Rita Wedding CD.
- ◆ Additional rehearsals with soloists or instrumentalists may be arranged with the organist (*fee applicable*).

Instruments:



Arrangements can be made for an instrumentalist (i.e. trumpet, violin, etc.) to play with the organ or piano. The Music Department can assist with arrangements if needed. (*fee applicable*).

Couples are welcome to attend weddings at St. Rita to listen to the music performed live by various cantors and instrumentalists. We can provide wedding dates which may be similar to yours in this regard.

Wedding Liturgy / Ceremony Planning

- i. The proper place for a wedding is the parish church of the bride or groom and it is only right and appropriate that the couple plan their wedding liturgy as the **Bride and Groom** administer the Sacrament of Matrimony to each other by the exchange of consent / vows.

As a solemn and sacred occasion of the Church all elements of the ceremony are appropriated to, and focused on, the Sacramental dimensions of the event. Prayer forms an integral part of the preparation and should become the foundation for married life.

The wedding liturgy gives public witness to the depth of their commitment to and for each other, reflecting the couples' personal relationship with God, each other, and their faith family.

- ii. Couples preparing for marriage at St. Rita receive a *Together for Life booklet* from which they select the 1st and 2nd readings and consent/vows that will be used in the wedding liturgy/ceremony.

Readings chosen by the engaged couple should reflect their:

- * relationship with God
- * and their understanding of the sacrament of marriage.

- iii. The priest or deacon is the officiant and principal witness for the Church. He acknowledges that the couple has entered into a Sacred covenant relationship with God and also into a legal contract.

Priest or deacon, along with the sponsor couple may assist in the selection of prayers and readings if needed.

~ **Officiant selects and proclaims the Gospel** ~

Liturgical Ministers and Attendants

Visiting Clergy:

At the initial visit with St. Rita priest, deacon or delegate a request for a visiting priest or deacon to officiate at the wedding **must be made**.

Approval must be given by St. Rita pastor for the delegation of a visiting Catholic priest or deacon to officiate. The visiting priest or deacon may assist in preparing the necessary pre-nuptial forms and documents.

Visiting priest must present a "celebrant" if he is not of the diocese of Dallas. He must also comply with the safe environment protocol of the diocese of Dallas.

Inter-faith/church ceremony: Clergy of another faith expression are welcome to assist in the wedding ceremony, but may not be the main celebrant/presider.

- 1) **Lectors**: Relatives/friends of the bride and groom may be chosen to proclaim selected Readings and Prayers of the Faithful.
 - * Care should be taken to select persons, *with reading voices and an understanding of Scripture*, to proclaim the Word of God with meaning and appropriate expression.
- 2) **Ushers**: Like Lectors, should be chosen from among close relatives / friends. They should present a warm, hospitable appearance and attitude when welcoming and seating guests.
- 3) **Eucharist**: If the Eucharist is to be celebrated, it is desirable to have Extra Ordinary Ministers of the Eucharist to assist the Celebrant. If necessary, the parish can assist with selections.
- 4) **Offertory**: Two or more persons should be chosen to bring the gifts of bread and wine to the Altar.
- 5) **Witnesses**: In addition to the officiating priest/deacon two (2) persons **MUST** witness the consent/vows. Members of the bridal party may be chosen.

Music Ministry



Welcome to the process of planning the music for your marriage celebration! The music ministry is here to assist with the planning, obtaining musical information, or additional musicians for your celebration.

We look forward to working with you!

Regarding Wedding Music:

St. Rita Music Ministry adheres to the guidelines of the Catholic Church regarding appropriate music for all liturgical celebrations. All music texts and styles **must be approved** by the Director of Music and the Pastor.

The Music Ministry provides:

- ◆ Organist
- ◆ Cantor
- ◆ A CD and Worksheet containing a wide range of beautiful selections suited for the wedding liturgy.
 - * *Listen to selections, identify and list choices using the worksheet provided.*
 - * *Email or telephone the Music Department at the St. Rita with your decisions one month prior to the wedding date.*
 - * *A copy of the worksheet may also be used when developing your wedding program.*

At St. Rita the Gloria, Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation are sung.

Recorded music or tapes/CDs are not allowed at any liturgical ceremony.